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77 SEOUL 10673

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ACTION EA-12
INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 /059 W
----------101160 200129Z 72

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/GDC/MR
REVIEWED BY BAFlick DATE 2/12/82

P 190921Z DEC 77
FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8277
INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO
CINCPAC
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CINCPAC FOR POLAD
E.O. 11652: N A
TAGS: SOPN, KS, US
SUBJECT: PRESS COVERAGE OF PAK TONGSON CASE
REF: SEOUL 10608 (DTG 160732Z DEC 77
SUMMARY: WEEKEND PRESS REPORTED FONMIN AND AMBASSADOR DEC 17 REMARKS NOTING "CONTRADICTIONS" BETWEEN THEM. END SUMMARY.
1. PAPERS QUOTED FONMIN DEC 17 SAYING THAT TLE PAK CASE HAD BEEN SETTLED IN PRINCIPLE, AND THAT "NEGOTIATIONS ARE ENTERING THE STAGE WHERE THEY JUST NEED FACE MAKE-UP." FONMIN REPORTEDLY ADDED THAT AGREEMENT HAD BEEN REACHED IN PRINCIPLE ON A GUARANTEE OF PAK'S RETURN AND THAT THE ONLY QUESTION WAS HOW TO EXPRESS IT IN A WRITTEN DOCUMENT. PAPERS SPECULATED THAT FINAL ANNOUNCEMENT WOULD BE MADE DURING THE WEEK OF DEC 19. PRESS NOTED THAT FONMIN WILL MAKE REMARKS ON U.S./ROK RELATIONS IN SPEECH TO BE GIVEN DEC 19 PM.
2. DEC 18 AND 19 PRESS FRONTPAGED AMB SNEIDER'S REMARKS

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TO PFP O SF UNG AT A DEC 17 RECEPTION AT THE NATL ASSEMBLY. AMBASSADOR WAS QUOTED AS SAYING THAT "IT WAS OUTSIDE OF THE POWER OF U.S. GOVT TO MAKE PAK RETURN TO KOREA IN THE EVENT THAT HE REFUSES TO COME BACK." CTANGANG ILBO FURTHER QUOTED AMBASSADOR THAT "DUE TO SITUATION IN CONGRESS IT WILL TAKE TIME" TO RESOLVE PAK'S CASE. SHINA ILBO QUOTED A DIPLOMATIC SOURCE AS SAYING, "NEGOTIATION ITSELF IS NOT EASY. SO LET US GIVE IT TIME AND WAIT." BOTH CHUNGANG ILBO AND SHINA ILBO NOTED SOME CONTRADICTION BETWEEN FONMIN'S AND AMBASSADOR'S STATEMENTS, SAYING THAT WHILE FONMIN HAD SAID THAT THE ONLY ISSUE REMAINING WAS TO "POLISH EXPRESSIONS" IN THE AGREEMENT, AMBASSADOR'S REMARKS SUGGESTED THAT THERE WAS STILL SOME DIFFICULTY IN U.S. GUARANTEEING PAK'S RETURN.
COMMENT: AMBASSADOR'S COMMENTS WERE NOT ACCURATELY REPORTED; THEY WERE MADE IN CASUAL CONVERSATION AND WERE NOT INTENDED FOR PUBLICATION.
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